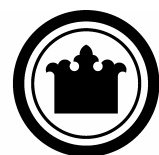


Burke Gilman Trail Redevelopment Project

Property Owners Meeting #1

March 14, 2006



King County

Introduction

The Burke Gilman Trail Redevelopment Project began in 2004 with a Trail Redevelopment Study led by the landscape architecture firm Atelier. This study evaluated approximately two miles of the Burke Gilman Trail through Lake Forest Park from NE 145th Street to Log Boom Park, and includes recommendations for how the trail can be redesigned and rebuilt to provide for the safety of all users, as well as adjoining homeowners. The trail design process, which is being led by landscape architecture firm, MacLeod Reckord, will take place throughout 2006-2007. This will include preliminary and final trail design, permitting, and construction documents of the trail improvements. Construction is scheduled to commence in mid-2007.

On Tuesday, March 14, 2006, King County hosted a meeting about the Burke Gilman Trail Redevelopment Project for homeowners whose properties lie adjacent to the trail. The meeting was held from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Lake Forest Park Civic Club. Meeting invitations were sent to 190 addresses adjoining the portion of trail between NE 145th Street and Log Boom Park. Sixty-four people signed in at the meeting.

Meeting Format

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for property owners to talk directly with the design team about the project – to share information about their properties and to ask questions. The format of the meeting was an open house with small group discussions, based on specific sections of the trail. For the purposes of the meeting, the trail was divided into three segments to facilitate more in-depth discussions: 1) NE 145th Street/City Limits to NE 153rd Street; 2) North of NE 153rd Street to NE 165th Street; and 3) North of NE 165th Street to Log Boom Park.

When people arrived they were asked to sign in and received several handouts including a project timeline and a comment form. A set of plans with a preliminary layout of the widened trail were displayed at the periphery of the room. Participants were asked to identify their properties by placing stickers over their homes on the map. Participants were then directed to one of the three small discussion tables based on their address. Designers from MacLeod Reckord were available at each table to talk with participants about the specific trail segment or general issues, to answer questions and take comments. Copies of the plans displayed around the room were at each table so that participants could write comments directly on the map.

Comment Highlights

Participants submitted comments in the small group discussions, both verbally and in writing on the plans at each table. Over twenty participants submitted written comments at the meeting and more than twenty-five submitted comments after the meeting either by mail, email or fax. Participants commented on a variety of topics, ranging from concerns about access to parking, maintaining and managing vegetation, adequate drainage, and changing trail use behavior. Many participants felt that trail policies such as cycling speeds and stop signs need to be enforced. They also felt that sightlines needed to be improved and that the trail needs to be better maintained. Some residents felt that fences and vegetation were important for safety as well as privacy. Others felt that the existing vegetation should be maintained or replaced to protect views. While some participants felt that the trail should be widened, others felt that the trail should not be widened because it could result in some bicyclists increasing their speed, making the trail dangerous for other users. Finally, several residents were interested in preserving habitat for certain species as well as native plants.

Specific comments made are reflected in two attachments. Attachment A is a summary of the comments received in the small group discussions. Attachment B is a summary of the written comments received to date. Both comment summaries are categorized by issue: access, construction, critical areas/drainage/erosion control, crossings, trail use policy and user behavior, utilities, vegetation/buffer planting, trail width, wildlife habitat and other comments.

ATTACHMENT A

Small Group Comments

The following reflects the general comments made in the three small group discussions at the property owner meeting.

Access

- Maintain ability of large vehicles such as garbage, fire, delivery, boat trailers, etc. to easily access properties east of trail.
- Propose traffic calming measures and additional lighting in areas where property owners must cross trail on foot to reach their homes on east side of trail (especially around NE 151st Street).

Design & Construction

- Install root barrier along entire trail.
- Concerns about impacts or potential loss of vehicular access, parking, fencing, vegetation and other improvements east of trail.
- Concerns about loss of privacy due to widening.
- Concern that widening will encourage speeding bicyclists.
- Expand trail to the west toward Beach Drive.
- Minimize impact on parking and roadway.
- Support widening trail (as long as it is paved).
- Widening trail will not change user behavior.
- Widening trail into ditch has environmental impacts (native salamander).
- Crushed gravel (or any uneven surface) is difficult to walk on for some, such as the elderly.

Critical Areas/Drainage/Erosion Control

- Drainage issues under trail are damaging streets and properties.
- Landslides are a big problem (especially on the southern stretch of the trail beginning at NE 145th Street).
- Flooding from creeks, such as at NE 153rd Street, is problematic.
- The 2001 Geotech report should be found and reviewed.
- There is weeping from the spring.
- Uncertainty about who is financially responsible for slope failure and drainage problems.

Crossings

- At every stop sign where there is a driveway, a mirror should be installed to improve driver visibility.
- Concern about how the crossing gradient (bench effect) will affect sightlines and stopping.
- Concern that consolidation of crossings will limit vehicular access to properties east of trail, especially for large vehicles (garbage, fire, delivery, boat trailers, etc.).
- Disagree with plans to remove stop signs for trail users.
- Intersection at 165th needs four stop signs. Cars and bikers should stop before trail.
- Propose maintaining trail stop signs at NE 165th Street.

Trail Use Policy and User Behavior

- Belief that the County will raise speed limit to 20 mph.
- Confusion as to difference between design speed, posted speed and ticketing speed.

- Consider multiple users (not just bicyclists) on trail when making design decisions. For example, higher speeds and no stop signs allow bikers to go faster and in turn create a more dangerous trail for other users.
- Do not increase speed for bicyclists in these highly populated areas.
- Do not remove any stop signs, because drivers and trail users need to stop.
- Enforcement of road crossing by trail users is needed because stop signs are ignored.
- Keep stop signs for bicyclists for safety reasons (segment of trail south of 165th intersection).
- New pavement will increase speed.
- Propose lowering posted speed limit through Lake Forest Park. More congested areas should have a speed limit of 10 mph.
- Separated walk/bike trails is great.
- Some trail users are rude and inconsiderate of other trail users and property owners.
- Speed of many bicyclists makes trail unsafe for all other users.
- Speed control.
- What about speed bumps to reduce bicyclist speed?

Utilities

- Many homes east of trail have utility connections to garages on west side of trail (especially around NE 151st Street).

Vegetation/Buffer Plantings

- Approve selective removal of problem vegetation, such as locusts and poplars.
- Concerns about appropriate plant choices in buffers planted by neighbors as well as vegetation planted by county. Currently, there is tall vegetation obstructing views of property owners on west side of trail.
- Concerns about maintenance practices by both property owners and the County.
- Concrete and retaining walls for trail expansion removes natural component of trail.
- Keep and/or replace existing fence planting maintain fence height +6 feet.
- Mature hedges are highly valued for privacy and screening.
- Screening should be planted and managed by County and not individual owners.

Wildlife Habitat

- Preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat should be a priority.
- Use native plants.

Other Comments

- CAG process didn't accurately represent homeowners.
- Appears priority is being given to lakeshore owners.

ATTACHMENT B

Written Comments

The following represents the 45 written/mailed comments gathered during and after the meeting (through April 11, 2006). It is not intended to be a complete listing of all written comments. Rather, the bullets represent the range of comments submitted.

Access

- Some streets off of Beach Drive are less than the minimum for fire and life safety vehicles. Narrowing dead-end streets off of Beach Drive would impede emergency vehicles from reaching some homes.

Character

- Consider two lanes, one for pedestrians and one for wheels.
- Maintain trail as a multi-use asset for bikers and pedestrians.
- Maintain multiuse character.
- The design and development of the area should complement small residential spaces.

Critical Areas/Drainage/Erosion Control

- Bank west of the trail is susceptible to landslides.
- Beams and concrete blocks are needed to hold hill on west side of drainage ditch.
- Concern about bluff areas.
- Drainage is inadequate.
- Drainage is important to the area.
- Drainage from the trail damages the road and is a problem even during the summer months.
- Groundwater drains under trail and across Beach Drive NE resulting in property damage.
- Place screened drains across new roads to prevent drainage to properties below.
- Significant amounts of water collect along the trail. Water overflows onto the road and floods garages.

Crossings

- Add signs announcing intersections.
- Design Ballinger Way intersection so bicyclists are encouraged to slow down and so they can be seen approaching the area.
- Do not remove stop signs on 165th and 170th, as children cross these streets to go to the Beach Club.
- Do not remove stop and yield signs for safety purposes.
- Do not take out stop signs where trail crosses street at Ballenger/Beach Drive.
- Do not take the 165th Street stop sign down. It is seldom observed now, and at the least, invites bikers to be cautious.
- Enforce stop signs.
- Maintain stop signs at intersections.
- Increase visibility at intersections.
- Preserve free right turn onto Bothell Way from Ballinger.
- There are too many stop signs in the Lake Forest Park area of the Burke Gilman trail. Bikers should not have to come to a complete stop for one or two houses. I have ridden on bike trails in various cities and seen nothing quite like this.

Fencing

- Do not impact fencing that separates the Burke Gilman trail from Beach Drive.
- Extend current county property fence an additional 15 feet on Beach Drive and 41st Avenue NE.
- Keep existing fence for security purposes, identify how fence will be impacted and identify how far trail will move towards the street.
- Keep existing fence on the County right-of-way for all residences.
- Keep fence for security and safety purposes.
- Keep tall fence between trail and homes.
- Removing the fence could increase crime to the area. There are already home invasions, rape and robbery with the fence up.
- Security fence should be at least eight feet tall for safety of trail and home owners on Beach Drive NE.

Parking/Driveways

- Do not remove or impact parking on Beach Drive.
- Driveways are used by bikers to park their cars while they use the trail.
- Driveways should not be combined.
- Keep parking.
- Keep parking along the fence, trail and in front of the homes.
- Beach Drive NE is used for residence guest parking, cyclist parking, Civic Club parking, City Park Parking, and commuter parking.

Property Owner Meeting

- It was evident that members of the staff had not personally visited areas of Beach Drive NE.
- Need specific detail and drawings; explanations are vague.
- The meeting on Thursday was frustrating, as it was chaotic and noisy. Residents have much more to say about the project. We need to see design schematics.
- The nice diagrams at the event were inadequate to demonstrate how the project will affect properties.

Safety

- Design driveways for sightlines.
- Safe and shared access to waterfront at bottom of 157th Place.
- The section of the trail at 47th Avenue NE and Beach Drive NE provides a convenient access for crime. This area suffers from a high crime rate.
- The trail is for everyone and safety is of top importance.

Trail Maintenance

- Currently, King County does not properly maintain the trail. If there is little money dedicated to maintaining the trail now, what will happen in the future?
- Gravel adjacent to the paved area may increase chance of accidents on pavement.
- Maintenance with respect to bumpy and broken pavement due to tree roots is key.
- The maintenance agreement given to homeowners is still in effect; how will this be affected after this project?
- There have not been any positive steps to improve on-going maintenance.
- Proper and regular trail maintenance is important.
- Protect pavement with root barriers.
- Repaving is ok.

- Use porous pavement for trail because asphalt has chemical runoff.

Trail Use Policy and User Behavior

- A large number of cyclists disregard the crosswalk signs. In the past twelve years there have been a number of serious cyclists and pedestrian accidents.
- Add sloped speed bumps.
- Add sign as bikers enter Lake Forest Park.
- Children and the elderly are afraid to use the trail due to speeding cyclists.
- Cyclists are rude and disrespect property homeowners.
- Enforce speed limits so as to control speeding cyclists and pedestrians.
- How do you propose to control aggressive speeding cyclists who disregard traffic laws and common courtesy?
- I do not appreciate cyclists trying to run me off the trail, or reaching out and tagging me with their hand.
- Keep the speed limit at 10 mph.

Trail Width

- Do not impact the width of Beach Drive NE.
- Expand the trail on the east side of Beach Drive NE, as the west side is narrow.
- Expanding the trail to the east side would wipe out valuable vegetation, decrease privacy, and require the construction of a high, extremely objectionable, expensive retaining wall. There is plenty of room for widening to the west, with no adverse impact on hill stability, drainage, aesthetics, or budget.
- There is insufficient space on the west side of present trail where there is a drainage ditch and our property. If the trail were to be widened to the west, a retaining wall and fence would be required.
- Widening trail will not change the behavior of trail users.
- Widen trail west of the drainage.

Vegetation/Buffer Plantings

- All native plants vegetate the bank between Edgewater Lane NE and the trail.
- Buffers and fencing provide privacy, diminished noise, and security.
- Cedar trees along the trail obstruct property owner views if they are not adequately and routinely maintained and trimmed. The best long-term solution is to replace the trees with appropriate, lower growing vegetation.
- Do not eliminate fencing/vegetation along the east side of the trail for privacy reasons.
- Do not remove arbor vitae and extensive rhodium plantings on Beach Drive NE, by widening to the East.
- Do not remove laurel hedge on Lakeshore Boulevard NE
- Do not remove foliage on trail on Beach Drive NE.
- Don't cut down flowering plum trees on Beach Drive NE.
- Foliage on trail provides needed visual security from walkers and bikers as well as privacy.
- Maintain vegetation nearing intersections for safety.
- Maintain or remove the patch of western red cedars on NE 153rd Street.
- One of the greatest assets of the trail is the trees that line it. By widening the trail, many of these natural trees will be lost. Keep these trees.
- The plantings and trees on Beach Drive NE, help to preserve privacy.
- Width and foliage south of 165th are important to reduce vandalism and enhance privacy.

Wildlife Habitat

- Native salamanders breed in ditch adjacent to trail and live in bank adjacent to road.

Other Comments

- Concern that property owners have never been asked for input or allowed to speak at forums.
- How can the County take possession of property that should have reverted back to the original plat owners when the railroads ceased to be a railroad?
- I would like an onsite meeting for concerned homeowners.
- Lighting should be of uppermost importance.
- Light stanchions (poles) should remain in place and in working order at the entryway/gates of all property owners south of the intersection of the Burke Gilman trail and NE 151st.
- People need to have good attitude and get along.
- The Burke Gilman trail was spiked last week in, or near Lake Forest Park.
- This redevelopment proposal has not addressed existing liability or safety issues—only aggravated them.
- We are excited to see the planned improvements come to life! We are not trail users for long distance or on a regular basis but we do like having the trails there.